

NEWSLINE RADIO - CBBS EDITION #119 - POSTED 04/09/94

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The following is late news about Amateur Radio for Radio Amateurs as prepared from NEWSLINE RADIO scripts by the staff of the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, INC. -- formerly the WESTLINK RADIO NETWORK. The electronic version of newslines is posted on this CBBS twice monthly. For current information updates, please call

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For further information about the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, please write to us with an SASE at P.O. Box 463, Pasadena, CA

91102.

Thank You
NEWSLINE

Some of the hams of NEWSLINE RADIO...

WA6ITF WB6MQV WB6FDF K6DUE W6RCL N6AHU N6AWE N6TCQ K6PGX N6PNY
KU8R N8DTN W9JUV KC9RP K9XI KB5KCH KC5UD KC0HF G8AUU WD0AKO DJ0QN
and many others in the United States and around the globe!!!

[869]

The following is a QST

Killer tornadoes sweep through the southeast and ham radio is there to provide communications in the wake of the devastation. Also, a California judge says the Part 97 rules give his court jurisdiction over ham radio on the air operations. He orders two more hams to stay off a repeater.

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SOUTHEASTERN TORNADOS

Some chilling moments from the March 27th tornado outbreak that killed more than 40 people in the Southeastern U.S. Amateur radio operators helped the public by providing Skywarn and other emergency communications. Alabama was hardest hit by the storms. Some dramatic storm spotting and damage reports were captured on tape:

"This is N4KMJ, Jack in Goshen Valley at the Goshen Methodist Church. The roof has exploded. I see one house, the top all gone. Power lines down. Vehicles wrecked. I am approaching the church more now. N4KMJ, rescue squad is on scene."

That was one of the first reports coming from the Goshen Methodist Church near Piedmont, Alabama. That's where 21 people -- including six children -- died when a tornado slammed into the church during Palm Sunday services. Skywarn nets were active across more than half the state.

"This funnel cloud is definite I mean it is real formed right now. But I can't hear any roar but there is a lot of lightning

goin' on, KC4KWX."

In some areas, tornadoes strike twice.

"The tornado has touched down in the Macedona area of Raglin. Second tornado, I repeat Macendona area of Raglin second touch down."

"Roger, Roger, I copy second touch down. Will advise National Weather N4YYQ."

Reports of large hail were common.

"We're experiencing hail at the present. Probably marble sized is what it would be considered and getting larger, comin' down pretty steady."

"We had golf ball sized hail at the bridge. I probably have several dents in the car."

Hams stayed at the National Weather Service near Birmingham for nearly 10 hours.

"W4CUE, NWS looking for severe weather reports only."

Palm Sunday 1994 has a new name in Alabama: Tornado Sunday. It's a day residents in the South will never forget.

In Georgia the state's ARES net was activated Sunday afternoon following reports of the tornadoes in Alabama. Amateurs manned nets in 12 counties in the storm's expected path. Local 2 meter net reports were funneled to the Georgia ARES net on 3975 khz, with liaisons to both Alabama and South Carolina. From there spotting reports were relayed to state Red Cross Headquarters in Atlanta. Nearly a dozen repeaters were used for emergency nets.

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TORNADO HAM TRAGEDY

The tornadoes in Alabama also brought personal tragedy to Jack Blair, N4KMJ. He's the ham who made the first report you just heard in the story about damage to the Goshen Methodist Church. As Jack moved closer to the church, he learned that his daughter had been injured, and his wife was among those killed when the building collapsed. We know you join with us in wishing Jack's daughter a speedy recovery from her injuries and in offering condolences to the Blair family on their tragic loss.

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CAL STATE COURT DECLARES JURISDICTION OVER HAM RADIO

A California Superior Court judge says that state courts at least state courts in California do have jurisdiction over the on-air activities of ham radio operators. In taking this position Judge Robert Hutson has also banned two hams from using a private repeater.

Judge Hutson quoted chapter and verse from section 97.313, subpart E of the FCC rules in making his decision. A decision we reported last week to grant a petition from the Claremont Amateur Repeater Association to issue a permanent restraining order barring Anthony Cardenas, WA6IGJ, and Drew Feldman, N3KSO, from operating on the clubs repeaters or taking part in any club activity.

The latest revision of Section 97.113, subpart E of the Amateur Radio rules and regulations states in part that any radio amateur in his operations obey all federal, state and local laws. It was only after talking to Sidney Radus, N6OMS, the attorney for CLARA that the scope of the judge Hutson's decision became evident.

"The argument that the other side was making was that only a federal court had jurisdiction. That the federal government had preempted all of these areas. What he found was that since federal law applied, but state and local law also applied, then there is no preemption and the states are free to act." Radus

Radus added that it was his view that this loophole in federal regulation applies only to the on the air operation of a radio amateur in cases where his or her operation may cause harm to other hams. He doubts that it could be construed as giving states and municipalities total control over Amateur Radio operations because this appears to be the only place in Part 97 where the FCC gives any authority to other jurisdictions. Most other experts in ham radio legal issues we have spoken with seem to agree with Radus.

The restraining orders against Cardenas and Feldman came just a bit more than a month after another Orange County Superior Court judge granted the clubs request for a similat order against Tim W. Seawolf, KJ5KE.

Its reported that Feldman has announced, on the air, that he will be filing an appeal.

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LICENSE DOWNGRADES

This just in. Word that the FCC has mailed out between sixty and seventy letters to hams throughout California canceling

license upgrades. This, in connection with the governments continuing probe into wide spread testing irregularities statewide. Most of the license downgrades are believed to be in Southern California and involve sessions run by a number of volunteer examiners that the government has temporarily had banned from the V.E. testing program. None of the names or call signs of those downgraded have been released by the FCC. All were given sixty dates to take a retest or face the loss of their higher license privileges. Word is that some of those who have lost their upgrades took their tests as far back as late 1991 and early 1992. That's all the information we have right now. More on the continuing California V.E. probe in future Newsline reports.

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W5YI LICENSE RENEWAL SERVICE

W5YI Report publisher Fred Maia seems to have become embroiled in another controversy not really of his own making. This one involves a mailout of his company of a renewal reminder to hams who'se licenses are about to expire. For a fee of five dollars, Fred's company offers to handle the license renewal paperwork. This is not unlike companies that provide this kind of a support for land mobile radio, broadcast and other FCC licensees.

Fred told Newsline that he is providing the service at cost as a way to advertise. But some hams seem to view it in another light. Already there have been several messages appearing on the national packet radio network warning of what the origionaters call a license renewal scam. The text of one of these postings all but says that the W5YI license renewal service is illegal. Another goes so far as to call it fraud. Others simply point out that any ham can get a form 610 from the FCC, fill it out, sign it and send it in at no cost other than postage.

Nor is the W5YI Group the only license renewal service operating. The American Radio Relay League has undertaken the same project, but only for its members only and with no fee involved. League members will receive a notice about 90 days before their license expiration date, along with an FCC Form 610 and an envelope addressed to the FCC.

In reality, the Leagues license renewal service is not free. You must be an ARRL member to use it and that membership costs thirty dollars a year. And there are also rumors that several V.E.C.'s and a number of ham radio database companies may get into the license expiration reminder and license renewal service as well. What charges will be made by these groups, if there are any, are unknown.

The bottom line is this. What Fred Maia and his W5YI group

are doing is legal. License renewal services may be new to ham radio, but they have been around in other services for years. And as ham radio continues to grow at a rate of 6000 to 7000 new hams a month, there is a lucrative market developing for all kinds of products and services including license renewals. Look for more services like this one to spring up in the months and years to come.

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FREE ARRL LETTER

Another ham radio newsletter price war may be on the horizon with word that the American Radio Relay League has decided to give away its ARRL Letter free of charge. But there is a catch. The catch is that you have to be an ARRL affiliated radio club to get the truly bargain rate.

The league says that it is limiting the free distribution of the ARRL Letter to the Editors of these club newsletters. Staffers at Headquarters have already mailed out the offer of a free one year subscription to qualifying newsletter editors.

No word from W5YI Report publisher Fred Maia as to whether he plans to match the league's free offer. The Westlink Report ham newsletter has already said that it will not.

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DAYTON SAREX

It's April and that means Spring in this part of the world. Time to get out and work on antennas, fix up the house and for thousands of hams... go to Dayton for the Hamvention.

For more than ten years, amateur radio operators have carried ham gear with them into space. They call the program SAREX, The Shuttle Amateur Radio EXperiment. More than a dozen flights have given thousands of students in schools all over the world the thrill of experiencing space close up and personally by taking part in two way conversations between kids on campus and astronauts aboard Columbia... or Endeavour... or Discovery, 200 miles above the earth, spinning along at 17 thousand miles an hour.

Teachers say this highly visible exposure has generated so much enthusiasm that several hundred youngsters have gone on to get licensed and now are members of the amateur radio fraternity.

SAREX is sponsored by the ARRL, AMSAT and NASA and is controlled by an appointed board called The SAREX Working Group. To celebrate its tenth anniversary, the Group accepted an invitation to stage a Forum at Dayton. Astronaut Tony England, W0ORE, who operated Slow Scan TV and voice back in 1985, will join Command Pilot Steve Nagel, N5RAW, who flew two SAREX

missions in the nineties, to tell us what it's like from an astronauts' point of view.

The Working Group itself will make a rare appearance. Rosalie White, who heads the Educational Activities Department at ARRL headquarters and works with the schools that are chosen to take part in SAREX, will team up with Frank Bauer, the AMSAT Vice President or Manned Space Flight who sets up the ground stations and telebridges that bring the astronaut signals to the classrooms. Lou McFadin, the Principal Investigator from the Johnson Space Center will demonstrate the SAREX equipment. Roy Neal, K6DUE as Chairman will introduce the players and describe our proud history.

Several SAREX pioneers are flying in for the occasion. Bill Tynan, President of AMSAT; Doug Loughmiller, a former AMSAT President; John and Karen Nickel, who helped form the SAREX team; all plan to share their experiences.

Add several teachers and some students telling what it was like for them... plus questions and answers with the audience... and you have what promises to be a major highlight, Saturday afternoon at the Dayton Hamvention this year.

I'm Roy, K6DUE, for Newsline.

The SAREX forum will take place Saturday, April 30th at the 1994 Dayton Hamvention in Dayton Ohio. We'll see you there.

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WESTLINK YOUNG HAM OF THE YEAR

A reminder from the Westlink Report ham radio newsletter that the nominating period for its annual Young Ham of the Year Award closes on Saturday April the 30th. The Westlink Report Young Ham of the Year award was conceived to honor the younger members of the Amateur Radio Community. Hams aged 18 and younger who have used Amateur Radio to significantly contribute to the benefit of the service, to their community or the nation are eligible.

With corporate underwriting from Yaesu USA, the 1994 winner will receive a trip to the Sea Pac convention, a piece of ham radio equipment and a special plaque denoting his or her accomplishments.

All nominations must be submitted on an official application available for a self addressed stamped envelope to the Westlink Report Young Ham of the Year, 28197 Robin Avenue, Saugus, CA 91350. The winner will be announced in early May.

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Mc Gan Award

Nominations are solicited for the 3rd Annual Philip J. McGan

Memorial Silver Antenna Award for volunteer public relations efforts on behalf of Amateur Radio. Nominees must be full ARRL members in good standing and not be an officer, Director, Vice Director, or paid ARRL staff member. Nominations are due by May 31, 1994, and must be made on official nominating forms, which are available from ARRL HQ, 225 Main Street, Newington Ct. 06111.

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BLANCHARD OBITUARY

Finally, last week, Newsline brought you the touching story of Frank Blanchard, AA4LB, in Birmingham, Alabama. Frank received a special honor in mid-March from fellow members of the Birmingham Amateur Radio Club. He was named this year's recipient of the Club's annual Citizenship Award. Due to a critical illness, Frank received his plaque early, during a special surprise visit to his hospital room. It was a very emotional presentation and one that won't be forgotten. We're saddened to tell you that on March 30th barely two weeks after receiving his award, Frank lost his battle with cancer. Frank Blanchard, appreciated for all the ways he found to help others, was just 56 years old.

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For this week, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline. You can write to us at Post Office Box 463, Pasadena, CA 91102.

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